

Senate Resolution 376

By: Senator Martin of the 9th

A RESOLUTION

- 1 Urging the President of the United States and the United States Congress to enact legislation
- 2 securing the citizenship of internationally adopted adult individuals; and for other purposes.

- 3 WHEREAS, the Child Citizenship Act of 2000 aimed to provide equal treatment under
- 4 United States law for adopted and biological children by granting citizenship to
- 5 internationally born adoptees. However, when the act became law, it did not apply to
- 6 internationally born adoptees who were already over the age of 18, those with legal adoptions
- 7 who entered on visas requiring a secondary re-adoption in the U.S., and those who were
- 8 adopted legally abroad or in the U.S. by U.S. citizens but entered the U.S. on nonimmigrant
- 9 visas; and

- 10 WHEREAS, as a result, an estimated tens of thousands of adult legal adoptees of U.S.
- 11 citizens who were born before February 27, 1982, and raised in the United States are not U.S.
- 12 citizens, are potentially undocumented, and further subject to possible deportation. These
- 13 adoptees' parents did not complete necessary processes to provide their adopted children with
- 14 citizenship or, in many cases, even a green card; and

- 15 WHEREAS, several deportations of individuals who were legally adopted from foreign
- 16 countries have already taken place, breaking up families by separating parents from minor
- 17 children, adult children from parents, husbands from wives, siblings and extended families
- 18 from each other, and returning the deported individuals to places where they were born but
- 19 have no family, language ability, or a means to support themselves or other connections and
- 20 are at risk of homelessness, poverty and mental health challenges or death; and

- 21 WHEREAS, adoptees who do not have citizenship have come from countries including
- 22 Argentina, Brazil, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Guatemala, El Salvador, India,
- 23 Ireland, Haiti, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Panama, Philippines, Russia, St. Kitts, Taiwan, Ukraine,
- 24 and Vietnam. There are an estimated 20,000 Korean American adoptees alone who do not
- 25 have American citizenship despite having been legally adopted; and

26 WHEREAS, two bills which would grant citizenship to adult adoptees were introduced with
27 bipartisan support in both the 114th and 115th Congresses and will be reintroduced in the
28 116th Congress: the Adoptee Citizenship Act of 2015 and 2018; neither bill was referred out
29 of committee for a Congressional vote; and

30 WHEREAS, the bills sought to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to grant
31 automatic citizenship to all qualifying children adopted by a U.S. citizen parent, regardless
32 of the date on which the adoption was finalized. Citizenship would be granted to any
33 individual who was adopted by a U.S. citizen before age 18, including kinship adoptions;
34 was physically present in the United States in the citizen parent's legal custody pursuant to
35 a lawful admission before the individual reached age 18; never previously acquired U.S.
36 citizenship; and was lawfully residing in the United States; and

37 WHEREAS, naturalization of adult adoptees who immigrated to America under the promise
38 of finding a permanent home is necessary to ensure that they are not forcibly removed from
39 what has become their home country; and

40 WHEREAS, the State of Georgia does not condone the deportation of individuals who were
41 legally adopted into American homes and should have every expectation that their citizenship
42 matches that of their adoptive parents. Further, the State of Georgia welcomes broad
43 legislation that will provide a pathway to citizenship for all adult adoptees whose adoptive
44 parents did not complete the naturalization process while they were children

45 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body
46 urge the President of the United States and the United States Congress to enact legislation
47 securing the citizenship of internationally adopted adult individuals.

48 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed
49 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the President of the
50 United States and to each member of Congress from Georgia.